

A Lincoln cent that's no moneymaker

By Roger Boye

HERE ARE more questions about coins and collecting from the mailbag:

Q.-I have a 1967 Lincoln cent that has a John F. Kennedy head facing toward Lincoln. The head of Kennedy is much smaller than Lincoln. Is this worth anything? Is it a mint error?  
J.O., Riverdale

A.-The head of Kennedy was stamped into your Lincoln cent [and many others] as a money-making gimmick by an enterprising entrepreneur. The stamping was done outside the United States Mint, and the coin is not a mint error or over-strike.

To a coin collector, your cent is worthless. As a novelty, it perhaps has some small value.

Q.-We will visit Philadelphia this summer and want to stop at the U.S. Mint. When is it open, and do we need an appointment? -J.C., Des Plaines

A.-Tourists are welcomed from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday at the Philadelphia Mint, 5th and Arch Streets. Visitors view equipment making U.S. coins and are informed of the operations thru displays and tape recordings. The tour takes at least 20 minutes, and some visitors stay for a couple hours or more.

Incidentally, the Denver Mint conducts 20-minute tours from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday thru Friday. The mint is located on Colfax Avenue between Cherokee and Delaware Streets. Both have displays of coins and medals and material describing how coins are made. There is no charge for the tours at either place, and no appointment is necessary.

Q.-Whenever I want to buy coins, I find the listing "B.U." in advertisements. What does that stand for? - D.L., Wauconda

A.-The listing means "brilliant uncirculated." An uncirculated coin is a new coin which shows no wear and has never been placed in circulation. A brilliant uncirculated coin is, as the words indicate, an uncirculated coin with a beautiful, brilliant surface.

Other notations used in describing variations of uncirculated coins include: "A.U." for "about" or "almost uncirculated," a coin which has seen the slightest amount of circulation; "Choice," a coin which is an above average uncirculated specimen, well struck, with few minting defects; and "Gem," an uncirculated coin which is the finest obtainable, sharply struck and free of minting defects.

Q.-One of our library patrons has expressed an interest in the book "Trade Tokens of Illinois," and we would like to purchase it for our collection. I would appreciate it if you could supply ordering details and the price of the book. - J.T., Palatine Public Library

A.-This outstanding catalog of Illinois trade tokens is available for \$12.50 from the author, Ore H. Vacketta, 415 S. State St., Westville, Ill. 61883.